

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
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21. (Cancelled)
22. (Cancelled)
23. (Cancelled)
24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)
26. (Cancelled)

27. (New) A radio access network having a first communication protocol, said radio access network defining first cells at least some of which neighbor foreign cells employing a foreign communication protocol different from said first communication protocol, said foreign communication protocol associated with a foreign communication system, the radio access network comprising:

a radio access network node structure for communicating with a multi-mode mobile radio in said first cells; and

a data mechanism for exchanging handover information through said network node structure with said multi-mode radio as said multi-mode radio is to be handed-over to at least one of said foreign cells, said data mechanism comprising a container structure comprising content expressed in the foreign communications protocol so that the node structure can serve as a conduit for the container and need not understand the content of the container structure.

28. (New)A radio access network as in claim 27, wherein the content of the container structure comprises communication parameters for the foreign communication system.

29. (New)A radio access network as in claim 28, wherein the communication parameters for the foreign communication system are written by the foreign communication system.

30. (New)A radio access network as in claim 27, wherein the content of the container structure includes a message or command dictated by the foreign communications protocol.

31. (New)A radio access network as in claim 30, wherein the command is a handover command.

32. (New)A radio access network as in claim 27, wherein the radio access network is a Universal Mobile Telephone System (UMTS) radio access network and the foreign communication system is one of a Group Special Mobile (GSM) or Personal Digital Cellular (PDC) communication system.

33. (New)A radio access network as in claim 27, wherein the radio access network is a third generation system and the foreign communication system is second generation system.

34. (New)A radio access network as in claim 27, wherein the container structure comprises a dedicated data mapped structure generic to said radio access network and said foreign communication system such that said generic data mapped structure transports both handover data content unique to said first communication protocol and handover data content unique to said foreign communication protocol.

35. (New) A mobile radio network is in claim 27, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include broadcast system information.

36. (New) A mobile radio network is in claim 27, wherein the multi-mode radio fills the container structure to include mobile radio capabilities information.

37. (New) A mobile radio network is in claim 27, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include neighboring cell information.

38. (New) A mobile radio network is in claim 27, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include neighboring cell measurement instructions.

39. (New) A mobile radio network is in claim 27, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include neighboring cell measurement instructions.

40. (New) A mobile radio network is in claim 27, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include handoff command information.

41. (New) A mobile radio network, comprising:

a radio access network having an associated first communication protocol for communicating to a multi-mode mobile radio in first cells serviced by said radio access network according to said first communication protocol;

a second network having an associated foreign communication protocol for communicating to the multi-mode mobile radio in at least foreign cells neighboring said first cells and serviced by said second network according to said foreign communication protocol, said radio network and said core network being in handoff communication with each other to handoff said mobile radio when said mobile radio commutes from one of said first cells to one of said foreign cells;

said handoff communication being in accordance with a data mechanism, said data mechanism comprising a container structure comprising content expressed in the foreign communications protocol so that the node structure can serve as a conduit for the container and need not understand the content of the container structure.

42. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the content of the container structure comprises communication parameters for the foreign communication system.

43. (New) A radio access network as in claim 42, wherein the communication parameters for the foreign communication system are written by the foreign communication system.

44. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the content of the container structure includes a message or command dictated by the foreign communications protocol.

45. (New) A radio access network as in claim 44, wherein the command is a handover command.

46. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the radio access network is a Universal Mobile Telephone System (UMTS) radio access network and the foreign communication system is one of a Group Special Mobile (GSM) or Personal Digital Cellular (PDC) communication system.

47. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the radio access network is a third generation system and the foreign communication system is second generation system.

48. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the container structure comprises a dedicated data mapped structure generic to said radio access network and said foreign communication system such that said generic data mapped structure transports both handover data content unique to said first communication protocol and handover data content unique to said foreign communication protocol.

49. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include broadcast system information.

50. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the multi-mode radio fills the container structure to include mobile radio capabilities information.

51. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include neighboring cell information.

52. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include neighboring cell measurement instructions.

53. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the mobile radio fills the container structure to include neighboring cell measurement results.

54. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the radio access network node fills the container structure to include handoff command information.

55. (New) A radio access network as in claim 41, wherein the second network is a core network.

56. (New) A method of operating a mobile radio network, the mobile radio network comprising:

a radio access network having a radio access network node structure for communicating using an associated first communication protocol with a multi-mode mobile radio in a first cell serviced by said radio access network; and

a second network having an associated foreign communication protocol for communicating to the multi-mode mobile radio in at least one foreign cell neighboring said first cell and serviced by said second network according to said foreign communication protocol, said radio network and said second network being in handoff communication with each other to handoff said mobile radio when said mobile radio commutes from the first cell to one of said foreign cells;

the method comprising:

providing a data mechanism for facilitating said handoff communication, said data mechanism comprising a container structure;

including in the container structure content expressed in the foreign communications protocol;

using the node structure as a conduit for communicating the contents of the container to the multi-mode mobile radio and wherein the node structure need not understand the content of the container structure.

57. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising including communication parameters for the foreign communication system in the content of the container structure.

58. (New) A method as in claim 57, further comprising the foreign communication system writing the communication parameters for the foreign communication system.

59. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising including a message or command dictated by the foreign communications protocol in the content of the container structure.

60. (New) A method as in claim 59, further comprising including a handover command in the content of the container structure.

61. (New) A method as in claim 56, wherein the radio access network is a Universal Mobile Telephone System (UMTS) radio access network and the foreign communication system is one of a Group Special Mobile (GSM) or Personal Digital Cellular (PDC) communication system.

62. (New) A method as in claim 56, wherein the radio access network is a third generation system and the foreign communication system is second generation system.

63. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising providing the container structure with a dedicated data mapped structure generic to said radio access network and said foreign communication system such that said generic data mapped structure transports both handover data content unique to said first communication protocol and handover data content unique to said foreign communication protocol.

64. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising the radio access network node filling the container structure to include broadcast system information.

65. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising the multi-mode radio filling the container structure to include mobile radio capabilities information.

66. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising the radio access network node filling the container structure to include neighboring cell information.

67. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising the radio access network node filling the container structure to include neighboring cell measurement instructions.

68. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising the mobile radio filling the container structure to include neighboring cell measurement results.

69. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising the radio access network node filling the container structure to include handoff command information.

70. (New) A method as in claim 56, wherein the second network is a core network.

71. (New) A method as in claim 56, further comprising :
exchanging handoff-specific information between second network associated with, respectively, said first radio communication protocol and said foreign communication protocol, and

filling said handoff-specific information container between said second network with said handoff information in a form particular to said foreign radio communication protocol type.